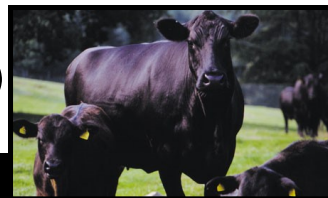


Livestock Newsletter

Ashe County Center

February 2022



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It's Better than a Snowball

"It's better than a snow ball," is not the healthiest way to plan on feeding your cattle this winter. Winter for many producers in Ashe County is calving season and the last third of the cow's pregnancy is critical to the calf's growth. Good quality hay will have a protein analysis of 9.5 - 11.1% crude protein and 50-56% analysis of total digestible nutrients. Pregnant yearling heifers will require a higher total digestible nutrient percentage. Growing feeder calves will need even higher quality hay.

Do you want good quality hay?

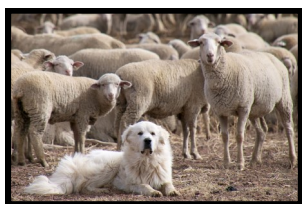
- Ensure that your soil is at its maximum efficiency. Routine soil sample, which is free to send off during the months of April - October, will tell you exactly what your soil will require
- Fertilize according to your soil sample
- Mow your hay during the boot to early head stage for first cutting. Then cut at 4-6 week intervals. During this stage orchard grass, timothy and fescue hay should be at its optimal quality (13.8% Crude Protein and 68% Total Digestible Nutrients)
- After this stage the quality of hay will continue to fall. In the early milk stage— seed forming the Crude Protein percent is 7.6% and Total Digestible Nutrients is 56%
- Make sure you bale your hay at 15% moisture or less
- Have your hay tested for nutrient content
- Store your hay in a shed or off the ground covered by a reusable heavy duty tarp

North Carolina Cooperative Extension can assist you with these steps to ensure you put up the best hay possible. For more information contact the North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Ashe County Center at (336) 846-5850.

Feeding in Winter Weather

While Feeding This Winter:

- Frozen ground that thaws just a bit on top can be slick and dangerous
- Avoid pulling loads up or down slopes when traction conditions are poor such as heavy dew, rain, snow or dry hard soil
- Make sure tractor tires are properly inflated
- If tractor feels unstable on a slope turn downhill, unless pulling a load, then turn uphill
- Always reduce speed when on steep slopes to reduce tipping momentum from hitting unseen holes, bumps, cattle patterns, or other obstacles
- Scout the area so you are aware of obstacles before hand
- Don't try stopping hay bales that get away
- Always wear your seatbelt



Contact Us

North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Ashe County Center
134 Government Circle, Suite 202
Jefferson, NC 28640

Phone: (336) 846-5850

Fax: (336) 846-5882

<http://ashe.ces.ncsu.edu/>

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Keep In Mind - Feeding Hay

Sometimes, you enter the field wondering if you will make it past the gate with the hay, or if you will slide into the fence coming down the hill. Safety is always the main issue when feeding especially during muddy times.

Avoid feeding hay near a creek as this can create a mess and put nutrients in the water that really should be on the pasture. The hay livestock does not consume becomes added nutrients for the soil. While they are eating hay, the manure and urine they expel also adds nutrients to the soil. However, if this process is done next to a creek, most of the extra nutrition is lost in the water.

Feeding hay at different locations in your field will allow nutrients to spread around and not combined in one spot. Unrolling your hay is a great way to add back to the soil and allow cattle to feed at one time, but it may prove too costly from the wasted hay if you aren't feeding everyday.

Lambing and Kidding Schedule

4 Weeks Prior:

- Vaccinate ewes and does for overeating disease and tetanus
- Deworm (read the label, some dewormers will cause abortions)
- Increase grain to one pound per ewe or doe each day

4-6 Weeks After:

- Vaccinate lambs and kids with C, D and T and again one week prior to weaning
- Tag
- Deworm

Prepare for Lambing and Kidding:

- Have barn and holding pens cleaned and ready
- Stock lambing and kidding kit with:
 - ◊ Bottles
 - ◊ Colostrum
 - ◊ Stomach tube
 - ◊ 60cc Syringe
 - ◊ Antibiotics
 - ◊ Needles and Syringes
 - ◊ OB Lube
 - ◊ Ear Tags
 - ◊ Tagger
 - ◊ Record Book and Pen
 - ◊ Lamb Puller
 - ◊ Dry clean rags
- You may not use it this year, but chances are you will and it's good to have everything with you each time



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Micah Orfield'.

Micah Orfield
Extension Agent, Agriculture